

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A joint distraction device for facilitating joint arthroscopy comprising:
an articulating member having at least one handle portion; and
a plurality of generally spheroidal members coupled to said
articulating member.

2. The joint distraction device of claim 1 wherein said articulating
member has proximal and distal ends, the joint distracting device further
comprising:
a first spheroidal member having a first diameter disposed
proximally on the articulating member to the other spheroids; and
a second spheroidal member disposed distally to said first
spheroidal member having a second diameter which is larger than said first
diameter.

3. The joint distraction device of claim 2 wherein said spheroidal
members have a plurality of diameters.

4. The joint distraction device of claim 2 wherein said spheroidal
members increase in diameter from said proximal end to said distal end.

5. The joint distraction device of claim 1 wherein said spheroidal members have at least one flat surface.

6. The joint distraction device of claim 5 wherein said spheroidal members have a pair of generally parallel surfaces defining a thickness.

7. The joint distraction device of claim 5 wherein said articulating member has proximal and distal ends, the joint distracting device further comprising:

a first spheroidal member having a first pair of generally parallel surfaces defining a first thickness, disposed proximally on the articulating member to the other spheroids; and

a second spheroidal member having a second pair of generally parallel surfaces defining a second thickness disposed distally to said first spheroidal member, the second thickness being larger than said first thickness.

8. The joint distraction device of claim 6 wherein said spheroidal members have a plurality of thicknesses.

9. The joint distraction device of claim 8 wherein said spheroidal members have a circular cross-section and have thicknesses which increase from proximal to distal end.

10. A joint distraction device for facilitating separation of two articulating bone surfaces comprising:

a plurality of spheroidal members;

an articulating coupling mechanism, operable to retain the spheroidal members;

wherein the spheroidal members are configured to separate the articulating bone surfaces at a first predetermined distance.

11. The joint distraction device of claim 10 wherein said articulating coupling mechanism has proximal and distal ends, the joint distracting device further comprising:

a first spheroidal member having a first diameter disposed proximally on the articulating member to the other spheroid members; and

a second spheroidal member disposed distally to said first spheroidal member having a second diameter which is larger than said first diameter.

12. The joint distraction device of claim 10 wherein said articulating coupling mechanism is a cord having a handle.

13. The joint distraction device of claim 10 wherein said spheroidal members increase in diameter from proximal to distal end.

14. The joint distraction device of claim 10 wherein at least one spheroidal member has at least one flat surface.

15. The joint distraction device of claim 10 wherein at least one spheroidal member has a pair of generally parallel surfaces defining a thickness.

16. The joint distraction device of claim 10 wherein said articulating coupling mechanism has proximal and distal ends, the joint distracting device further comprising:

a first spheroidal member having a first pair of generally parallel surfaces defining a first thickness, disposed proximally on the articulating coupling mechanism to the spheroids; and

a second spheroidal member having a second pair of generally parallel defining a second thickness disposed distally to said first spheroidal member, the second thickness being larger than said first thickness.

17. The joint distraction device of claim 15 wherein said spheroidal members have a plurality of thicknesses.

18. A method of separating two articulating surfaces of a joint comprising the steps of:

providing an articulating member having at least one handle portion; and

a plurality of generally spheroidal members disposed on said articulating member;

positioning at least one spheroidal member adjacent to the articulating surface; and

applying forces to the spheroidal member so as to cause the articulating surfaces to separate.

19. The method according to Claim 18 wherein providing a joint distraction device further includes providing a first spheroidal member having a first diameter disposed proximally on the articulating member to the other spheroid members, and a second spheroidal member disposed distally to said first spheroidal member having a second diameter which is larger than said first diameter.

20. The method according to Claim 19 wherein at least one spheroidal member comprises a cross-section selected from the group of a rectangle, a circle, and an ellipse, and combinations thereof.